ARCHITECTONICS OF SILENCE

Knowlton School of Architecture I Ohio State University
Vertical Studio ARCH 3420-4420 I Spring 2015

Instructor: Isabela Gould
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Kai Ziehl, Photography, Black & White

“What man makes, nature cannot make, though man uses all the laws of nature to make it. What guides it to be made, the desire to make it, is not in universal nature. Dare I say that it is Silence, of lightless, darkless desire to be, to express a prevalence of spirit enveloping the Universe.”

Louis Kahn, 1967 Space and Inspirations

INTRODUCTION:

The studio proposes an exploration of the notion of “silence”, its tectonic expression and translation into architectural space through a new Contemplative Hub in Columbus, Ohio.

The first part of the studio will be dedicated to research and a short, four-week project called Container of Silence, which will challenge the understanding of the nature of “silence” by identifying various “situations” through research in form, light and materiality. The second part will unfold with the design of the new Contemplative Hub, an agency for social well-being, community collaboration, cultural interaction and contemplative leadership, seeking a quiet refuge in the hectic urban fabric of the city. The hub will be approximately 40,000 SF and will host an open program, with a series of flexible spaces that support a community that collaborates, communicates, comingles, co-creates, co-hosts and cultivates compassion.

The ultimate intent of the studio is to open a dialogue between architecture, communities and the city, in an attempt to join the practical with the poetic through the development of architectural research and inquiry. A reiterative process of experimentation through drawing and three-dimensional modeling will be used to articulate the translation of conceptual ideas into built form.
BRIEF

The studio will operate on the assumption of a client-architect relationship and within socioeconomic constraints and buildable premises.

Your “client” is a coalition of local organizations dedicated to bringing mindfulness and compassion to communities and neighborhoods in the Columbus area. The partnership is in the process of developing a vision for a larger Contemplative Hub, which would not only enlarge and enrich the current operations of each individual organization but would also become an interface for a greater and deeper engagement with the local community. The goal is to establish an urban model of social enterprise based on the idea of an integrated network of for-profit and not-for-profit entities providing jobs, workforce training, leadership, and social and economic development services driven by the needs of the local community in which the Contemplative Hub would exist.

The “client” would like to develop a feasibility model for this new vision and is asking you for proposals that could further define their thinking. The two major questions that they would like to address are: first, how could a building hold multiple entities with shared values and needs without constraining the potential for collaboration and development? And second: how could such a structure grow and change with the constantly evolving needs of communities? The design process is therefore intended to target not just a spatial response to a programmatic agenda but rather the larger questions of community engagement, social innovation and sustainable living within the urban setting of Columbus. In this process you are expected to engage in generative constructive thinking through sustained research as you articulate questions for design, construction and detailing within the larger frame of programmatic, socio-economic and environmental issues.

As a first step in the design process you are asked to research, analyze and synthesize existing buildings and structures that invoke a sense of silence, stillness and contemplation, in an effort to establish an understanding of strategies and attitudes and establish your own framework of possibilities and limitations. As a second step, you will then formulate your own strategies for designing and developing your solution to the site and program. Your proposals should be articulated on a buildable premise and should explore in depth the poetic, programmatic and technical dimensions of your design. The expectation is that your exploration will be manifold, at various scales, from site to program, to structure, volume and detail, as parallel threads of design thinking and engagement.

The design process will be structured in four phases:

1. Precedent research and site analysis
2. Concept Design: articulate a design logic and strategy
3. Schematic Design: develop design components
4. Design Development: detail and refined resolution

Specific assignments and drawing requirements will be given out with each design phase of the project. Production of complete, legible, and coherent verbal and graphic representations will be expected at each design review.
PROGRAM + SITE

The Contemplative Hub will be a 40,000 SF new facility. The program will be grouped under three main components seen as the main operating revenue streams of the center. Each component will be anchored by one or more “agencies” that offer services and support to the surrounding community.

Food: The anchor of the first revenue stream will be a Restaurant that would offer employment and be engaged with the community through a sustainable and social agenda.

Program will consist primarily of a main kitchen and dining area, with additional food production and dining areas distributed throughout the rest of the program to support more private functions. It is envisioned that an outdoor community garden will be part of the food production.

Meditation: The anchor of the second revenue stream will be a Shambhala Meditation and Retreat Center that would offer its spaces not only to practitioners but also to local business for executive retreats, company meetings or miscellaneous gatherings. The staff who supports the restaurant and the meditation and retreat center could live on site in permanent housing units offered in addition to the rooms offered for temporary retreat.

The program will consist of several meditation halls able to host different size groups (up to a large group of 500 people), approximately 30 residential rooms for temporary retreat and 10 residential units for permanent housing of operating staff. Ample living and gathering spaces, including areas for children, as well as several dining areas will be essential program elements in hosting the meditation and retreat components. Shambhala arts spaces such as tea ceremony, ikebana, kyudo range, art gallery and a small retail store will also support the center. It is envisioned that outdoor gardens, pavilions, and meditation and contemplative spaces will further extend the program onto the site.

Conversation: The third revenue stream will be a non-profit business incubator that would facilitate cross learning and stimulate different types of thinking in a non-business like environment. The incubator will offer a two to three year home for 4-8 emerging charities - classrooms and educational spaces, library, open and flexible office space for rent, and administrative offices. It is expected that a staff of 6-8 people will provide professionalization that could include branding, graphic and website design, and facilitate the sharing of overhead expenses and resources on finance, accounting, fundraising and public relations.

A more detailed program will be provided within the first few weeks. Meetings with client representatives during the design process will facilitate a better understanding of the Contemplative Hub’s proposed philosophy, practice and vision.

The site for the proposed center will be at the southwest corner Neil and Vine Streets, in downtown Columbus. It is in very close proximity to several popular neighborhoods – The Arena District, Victorian Village and Short North, which have undergone great revitalization and development in the last 20 years. On the West side, the site is bordered by Interstate 670, on the North by the exit route off of Ohio Freeway.
315, and on the South by an active railway, which render the site accessible only from Neil Avenue. In spite of its adjacencies to the lively residential, entertainment and art districts, the site bears a leftover quality and an edge condition, remaining in great need of re-integration into the downtown urban fabric.

Additional Site Maps and Information
Think-Urban
http://www.think-urban.com/columbus/neighborhoods/arena.html
OBJECTIVE

While there are certain number of constraints that you will have to embrace in your project it is expected that you will recognize opportunities for advancing your design work by thinking beyond given parameters and simple form making. You are therefore encouraged to further define the program based on your research, your vision for how the new center could operate as a social and cultural hub, as well as the overall relationships it would establish with the site and the neighboring communities. You will be required to develop proposals that deeply question the relationships between the programmatic elements, the various user groups, issues of access and privilege, public versus private, viewer versus viewed, bounded versus boundless, material versus immaterial, natural versus man-made, etc.

It is the overall goal of the course to engage your ability to build abstract relationships by fostering a dialogue on multiple theoretical, socio-economic, cultural, technological and environmental contexts. Your design process should therefore be one that integrates critical thinking, investigative questioning and applied research in determining function, form and building systems and their impact on human conditions, behavior and the environment. Your proposals are expected to be not a mere sum of required parts, but rather a synthesis of your design thinking skills, technical knowledge and representation skills.

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Marcelle Gilkerson/ Director, Shambhala Columbus
Janice Glowski/ Director of Practice and Education, Shambhala Columbus
Tom Gregoire/ Dean, College of Social Work, Ohio State University
Anna Stewart/ Field Education Coordinator, College of Social Work, Ohio State University
Marissa Kress/ Field Placement Coordinator, College of Social Work, Ohio State University
Joe Bellusso, Cincinnati, Oh
Eric Zimmer, Columbus, Oh
RESOURCES

Books

Bachelard, Gaston - *The Poetics of Space*

Koolhaas, Rem - *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan*
The Monacelli Press (December 1, 1997)

Shambhala Publications; Second Edition (September 9, 2008)

Larson, Kent; Scully, Vincent and Mitchell, William - *Louis I. Kahn: Unbuilt Masterworks*

Buttiker, Urs - *Louis I. Kahn: Light and Space*
Watson-Guptill (August 1, 1994)

Kahn, Louis I. - *Silence and Light: The Lecture at ETH Zurich, February 12, 1969*
Park Books; Pap/Com edition (May 15, 2013)

Plummer, Henry - *Cosmos of Light: The Sacred Architecture of Le Corbusier*
Indiana University Press (March 21, 2013)

Bognar, Botond - *Material Immaterial: The New Work of Kengo Kuma*
Princeton Architectural Press; 1 edition (November 4, 2009)

Browne, Blaine - *Matter in the Floating World: Conversations with Leading Japanese Architects and Designers*
Princeton Architectural Press (March 9, 2011)

Pallasmaa, Juhani - *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*
Wiley & Sons; Third Edition (May 14, 2012)

Zumthor, Peter - *Thinking Architecture*
Birkhäuser Architecture; Third Edition (June 21, 2010)

Zumthor, Peter - *Atmospheres*
Birkhäuser Architecture; Fifth Edition (June 1, 2006)

Holl, Steven; Pallasmaa, Juhani and Perez-Gomez, Alberto - *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture*
William K Stout Publishers; Second Edition (July 15, 2007)

Holl, Steven - *Parallax*
Princeton Architectural Press; Second Edition (November 1, 2000)

Yu-Fu Tuan - *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*
University Of Minnesota Press (February 8, 2001)

Christopher Alexander - *A Pattern Language*
Oxford University Press (1977)
Wong, Eva - *Feng Shui*
Shambhala; 1 edition (July 15, 1996)

Susan Szpakowski and Barbara Bash - *A Little Book of Practice*
ALIA Institute (2010)

**Websites**

Shambhala Columbus
http://columbus.shambhala.org/
http://www.shambhala.org/centers/
http://shambhalatimes.org/2012/01/19/update-on-the-kalapa-capital-centre/
http://www.sakyongfoundation.org/shambhala-vision-campaign/kalapa-centre-in-halifax/

Windhorse Farm
http://www.windhorsefarm.org/pages/group-rentals/lodging.php

Charter for Compassion
http://charterforcompassion.org/

The Cleveland Model, Cleveland, Ohio
http://www.thenation.com/article/cleveland-model/
http://community-wealth.org/content/cleveland-model-how-evergreen-cooperatives-are-building-community-wealth
http://evergreencooperatives.com/

The Greyston Bakery & Greyston Foundation, Yonkers, NY
http://zenpeacemakers.org/zen-peacemakers/who-we-are/greyston-mandala/

Hasso Plattner Institute of Design, Stanford, CA
http://dschool.stanford.edu/

Bee Space, New York
http://www.beespacenyc.org/

3C Forum, Cincinnati, Columbus, Cleveland
http://3cohio.org/

Looking Over the Overlooked: Michael Bongiorno at TEDxColumbus
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDNiUT0TA5s
Precedents

**Omega Center for Sustainable Living**, Rhinebeck, NY, 2006-2010/ BNIM Architects (6,250 sf)
http://www.eomega.org/omega-in-action/key-initiatives/omega-center-for-sustainable-living
http://www.bnim.com/work/omega-center-sustainable-living

**Tschuggen Bergoase Wellness Centre**, Arosa, Switzerland, 2006 / Mario Botta Architetto (5,749 sf)

**The Therme Vals**, Graubunden Canton, Switzerland, 1996/ Peter Zumthor
http://www.archdaily.com/13358/the-therme-vals/
http://www.archdaily.com/452513/peter-zumthor-seven-personal-observations-on-presence-in-architecture/

**Garden Terrace Miyazaki**, Japan, 2012/ Kengo Kuma and Associates (49,105 sf)
http://www.dezeen.com/2013/05/18/garden-terrace-miyazaki-by-kengo-kuma-and-associates/

**Kripalu Masterplan & Housing Tower at Kripalu Center**, Stockbridge, MA, 2008/ Peter Rose + Partners (34,000 sf)
http://www.roseandpartners.com/projects/kripalu_masterplan

**Office Building**, Portugal/ Jorge Mealha

**Kapitaal Offices**, Utrecht, Netherlands/ ZakenMaker, Studio Toon Welling and Atelier Gsbrt

**395 Page Mill Road**, Palo Alto, USA/ Studio O+A

**Leitao 653**, Sao Paolo, Brazil/ Triptyque
http://www.dezeen.com/2013/08/16/leitao_653-studios-by-triptyque/

**Startup City**, London, England/ 00/ and Space Station
http://www.dezeen.com/2011/10/16/startup-city-by-00-and-space-station/

**Google Campus**, London, England/ Jump Studios
http://www.dezeen.com/2012/05/01/google-campus-by-jump-studios/

**Barbarian Group Offices**, New York, USA/ Clive Wilkinson

**Beats by Dre**, Culver City, Los Angeles/ Bestor Architecture

**Soviet Telecommunications Building**, Moskow, Russia/ Archiproba
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POLICIES

Course Format: Studio meetings will be of two types: collective meetings that engage material as a group, and studio sessions that engage individual efforts. Collective meetings include pin-ups and reviews. Studio sessions will be desk critiques and studio exercises. In all cases, the entirety of studio time will be spent on the studio project and students must be ready to present at the beginning of class. Studios are based upon ongoing research. Assignments and requirements are subject to the discoveries of previous work and substantiated by communications between the instructor and studio. Students must check their university email daily.

KSA Lecture Series: Although not required, students are strongly encouraged to attend the KSA Lecture Series. The Series is an invaluable source of information made easily accessible.

Deadlines: Students who miss deadlines due to valid and documented extenuating circumstances may submit the required work at a date agreed upon with the instructor. University regulations limit such circumstances to serious personal illness and death of an immediate family member, and both cases require written documentation to: a doctor’s note or a newspaper obituary. Unexcused late projects will not be accepted, incomplete projects will be evaluated in relation to their degree of completion, and a student is present only if he or she presents sufficient work to the instructor. A student will be warned by email after the first unexcused absence; a student’s grade will drop one letter grade after the second and third unexcused absences; and a student with four unexcused absences can be immediately dismissed and given an “F.” Again: you are required to check your OSU email daily.

Documentation: Students must provide hardcopy and digital reproductions of all final projects. Hardcopy reproductions will consist of images of all final models and 8.5” by 11” reproductions of all presentation drawings. Digital reproductions of both models (as jpegs) and drawings (as PDF files) will be stored on CD’s, one CD per student. Students must place documentation in their instructor’s KSA office mailboxes by 4 PM Monday, April 21, 2014. Failure to meet this deadline will result in a grade of "incomplete."

Evaluation: Studio work is both individual and collective. Evaluation will include not only individual design excellence, but also a student’s contributions to the studio through collective research, documentation and discussions. Grading is based on a comparison with other students in the course, with students who have taken the course previously, and with the instructors’ expectations relative to the objectives of the course. Evaluation of projects is by jury review involving reviewers from other courses, other academic institutions, and architectural firms. For an "A", the student must satisfy the course objectives excellently; for a "B", in an above average manner; for a "C" in an average manner; for a "D" in the lowest acceptable manner; and an "E" denotes that the student has not satisfied the course objectives.

Evaluation Criteria
1. Active participation in the class during all phases.
2. Effective response to all assignments and tasks.
3. Sustained interest in the topics presented through applied research and independent investigation.
4. Demonstration of critical thinking and design thinking skills.
5. Demonstration of effective use of fundamental design skills.
6. Ingenuity, creativity and effectiveness in responding to the design challenges.
7. Clarity in communication and representation.
8. Quality of the final product.
9. Timely completion of assignments.
10. Overall contribution to the class.

**Sexual Harassment:** O.S.U.'s Sexual Harassment policy, which applies to all faculty, staff, and students, includes lewd remarks and inappropriate comments made in the studio environment, classroom, and computer labs as well as the "display of inappropriate sexually oriented materials in a location where others can see it." Students can file a complaint by contacting Student Judicial Affairs at 292-0748. Sanctions include reprimand, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

**Students with Disabilities:** If a student requires accommodation for a disability, he or she should immediately arrange an appointment with the professors and the Office for Disability Services. At the appointment, the professors, disability counselors, and student can discuss the course format, anticipate needs and decide upon accommodations. Professors rely on the Office for Disability Services for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing accommodation strategies.

**Studio Safety:** To provide the best education, the KSA must act as a community. As such, its members (faculty, students, and staff) must respect and watch out for each other. The studio is available for KSA students 24/7. The University escort service provides safe transportation to and from Knowlton Hall 7:30AM-3AM. Call 292-3322.

**Studio Behavior:** Students must work in the studio. Students are responsible for keeping their areas clean, their floors free from obstructions, and all studio furniture in good condition and its original location. All presentation materials must be removed from review spaces following reviews and all studio materials must be removed from the building at the close of every quarter. Students may, however, store material in their credenzas over winter break. Studios are inspected on the last day of final exams – negligent students are subject to grade withholding and maintenance costs.

Please also note:
1. The following items are prohibited in Knowlton Hall: non-KSA furniture, liquor, weapons, bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, and pets.
2. The following tools are prohibited in Knowlton Hall: spray paints, foam cutter wands, welding devices, heat guns, and any flame or gaseous liquid device.
3. The following safety compliances must be observed: electrical power cords cannot be connected in a series or extend over traffic areas; fire extinguishers must remain accessible and in full view; access to stairwells, corridors, and aisles must maintain a 44” clear width and handrails must be unobstructed.
4. Building surfaces cannot be marked, anchored to, or penetrated.
5. Installations may not occur in any part of the building except by permission of Philip Arnold, KSA Building Coordinator.
6. Power tools are restricted to the mat/fab lab except by permission of Philip Arnold, KSA Building Coordinator.
7. Loud noise is forbidden.
8. Graffiti and vandalism are grounds for disciplinary action.